

Reconsidering Hitler's Gestapo

Review

[Kerry R. Bolton](#)

The Gestapo: The Myth and Reality of Hitler's Secret Police. Frank McDonough. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2015).

Dr. Frank McDonough, professor of international history at [Liverpool John Moores University](#), has written a book that will be of much interest to “historical revisionists.” Like Robert N. Proctor’s *Nazi War on Cancer*¹ it is a revisionist work, and McDonough describes it as such. McDonough is by no means an apologist for any aspect of the Hitler regime. However, McDonough concludes with the obligatory moral outrage; after having questioned the primary assumptions on Gestapo villainy, he ends with a lamentation on how the Gestapo got off so lightly after the war.

McDonough shows mainly through an examination of primary documents that the Gestapo was an efficient police force, small in number, not the omnipresent terror arm of a terror state; scrupulous at all levels with facts and the accuracy of records, focusing on the recruitment of university graduates, particularly to doctoral standard, while retaining the services of mostly non-Nazi, Weimar-regime, career policemen; quick to arrive at conclusions based on objective investigation, and promptly dismissing most accusations brought to their attention without undue delay.

The book opens with an account of the “first Protestant Evangelical preacher killed for defying the Nazi regime on religious grounds,” Paul Schneider, at Buchenwald in 1939. He had been incarcerated there in 1937 after being warned many times about his criticism of the regime, including his ridicule of the stormtrooper martyr Horst Wessel. He had been freed from custody due to the lobbying of his parishioners. Two hundred local ministers, and a crowd of local parishioners attended his funeral.² Hence one already might ask questions: Why hadn’t this monstrous terror state quietly eliminated Schneider in 1933, when he had already started critiquing the new regime? Why was he given so many warnings? Why did such a supposedly totalitarian state heed the lobbying for his release by parishioners? Why did he receive a widely attended public funeral, when he might have been quietly executed, and some pretext offered?

Despite the popular, and the academic, image of the Nazi state as all-embracing and Hitler as all-powerful, the German people as brainwashed, and the Gestapo as “a huge organization with agents everywhere,” “in reality any person who accepted and supported the Nazi regime enjoyed enormous individual freedom. Hitler’s regime was hugely popular. Once you appreciate this essential fact you begin to understand the reality of life inside Nazi Germany.”³

In 1969 Martin Broszat in *The Hitler State* questioned the image of the Nazi state and called Hitler a “weak dictator” who presided over many factions.⁴ The six-volume study under his direction, *Bavaria in the National Socialist Era*, examining resistance to Nazi rule, concluded that the regime was not as totalitarian as assumed, and that there had been “much greater latitude to criticize.”⁵ German historian Reinhardt Mann examined the Düsseldorf files of the Gestapo and found that the police apparatus was not pervasive, that the organization was much too small. The Gestapo were not “brutal, ideologically committed Nazis,” but mostly veteran career detectives. Mann’s study, states McDonough, was the

basis for what has become “the revisionist interpretation” of the Gestapo.⁶ The American historian Robert Gellately showed in his 1990 book *The Gestapo and German Society*, that they relied on public support, and that the “Gestapo posed no real threat to law-abiding citizens in Nazi Germany.” American historian Eric Johnson in his 1999 book *The Nazi Terror*, based on court files from Cologne and Krefeld and from interviews, showed that loyal Germans were treated with “kid gloves,” and that “most Germans did not fear [the Gestapo] at all.” He did differ from Gellately in considering Gestapo officers as more proactive and brutal. While these studies were limited as to localities, McDonough sought a broader study of Gestapo files.⁷

Thorough-going professionals

The Gestapo relied on the public for information on state enemies. The assumption that denunciation to the Gestapo meant torture and concentration camps is wrong. The Gestapo spent “an exhaustive amount of time” on cases; “most ended up being dismissed, with no charge, or a surprisingly lenient punishment.” The maximum duration allowed for protective custody was 21 days, but the Gestapo tried to resolve matters before that time. Releases from custody were “the norm, not the exception.” McDonough states that the Gestapo followed “very strict legal guidelines.” The Gestapo had a great deal of autonomy within its own structure. Some cases that carried the death penalty “were often dismissed, without charge,” while some that seem trivial might receive harsh punishment. All cases were investigated with thoroughness.⁸

In tracing the origins of the Gestapo McDonough alludes to Germany having a long tradition of “political espionage.” He mentions the actions of Ludwig of Bavaria in having subversives spied on in beer halls in 1848, and the creation of political police in Prussia in 1871.⁹ However, this was no specifically German or Prussian mania. Adam Zamoyski shows that spying on subversives, with a particular suspicion about Freemasons and the Carbonari, reached obsessive heights in the aftermath of the wars with Jacobin and Napoleonic France, prompted in particular by Austria’s Metternich.¹⁰ The political police and surveillance in National Socialist Germany seems mild in comparison to the network of informers, spies and letter-opening operatives at post offices throughout Austro-Hungary, Germany, Russia, and England during the 19th century.

The Gestapo arose from what the National Socialists inherited from Prussia, a police apparatus that had before 1933 extensively monitored the Nazi party and secured 40,000 prosecutions against Nazis in that state.¹¹



*Rudolf Diels, first Commander of the Gestapo; 1933–1934
Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-K0108-0501-003 / CC-BY-SA 3.0 [CC BY-SA 3.0 de
(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/deed.en>)], via Wikimedia Commons*

The omnipresent Gestapo is a myth. In 1933 it started with 1,000 employees. Near the end of the war it had 32,000, including administrators. The localities were “severely understaffed.” For example Cologne in 1942 had 69 officers.¹² Gestapo director Heinrich Müller was a career policeman during the Wilhelmine and Weimar eras. He did not join the Nazi party until 1939. All the section heads in Berlin were likewise career policemen, and most were university graduates. Only one had been a Nazi party member before 1933. The methods used were the same as the regular criminal detective police.¹³ However, “enhanced interrogation techniques” were also developed. There was also the *SD*, which McDonough identifies with the mobile killings in the East.¹⁴ The other regional chiefs were likewise mostly career policemen, usually university-educated, many to doctorate level.¹⁵ “The high

ranks of the Gestapo resembled an academic university senior common room more than a police department.” By the late 1930s a university degree, especially in law, was regarded as more important than a police background. The rank-and-file officers were regular police, who even at Nuremberg and under denazification, were mostly exonerated of “crimes against humanity.” They were able to show that they had conducted themselves in a professional and efficient manner.[16](#)

The Weimar police who became Gestapo officers had already undergone tough experiences. During Weimar they had dealt with murderers, rapists and serious gangsters. They were skilled in “the art of detailed questioning.”[17](#) However, the Gestapo were not inordinately inhumane according to the police methods and laws of those times, not only in Germany but in comparison to the democracies. Gestapo officers were given detailed instructions on investigating a case in every detail. A state lawyer and an investigating judge were appointed at the outset.

A particularly cogent description by McDonough is that,

The assumption that Gestapo officers arrested individuals, interrogated them brutally, then sent them to a concentration camp, is a myth. Each case was dealt with exhaustively before any decision on punishment was decided upon. Most of those arrested ended up within the traditional justice system, and were charged with a specific crime that was dealt with by the courts. Sending individuals to a concentration camp was always a last resort, especially for an ordinary German citizen who was not linked to the selected target opposition groups. Many of those arrested were released without any charge.[18](#)

Communists called to account by SA

While the National Socialist Wilhelm Frick became Minister of the Interior, Nazification of the police did not follow a rigorous process. McDonough states that Nazi party membership was not a requirement for recruitment to the political police and subsequent Gestapo, but rather, police experience. Only 7.3 per cent of the police officers were purged when the Nazis assumed government.[19](#)

A harsh calling to account of opponents in the first few months of Nazi rule was unleashed on the Communists with the sanction of Göring, not by the Gestapo or the SS but by the SA, and it proved “difficult to contain.”[20](#) However given that the National Socialist assumption to government was a social revolution, it was one of the more bloodless in history in comparison to the revolutions that ushered the modern democratic era, such as the Jacobins with their extermination of the Vendee, and the Bolshevik revolution with its tens of millions of victims.

While Gestapo chief Rudolf Diels, an opportunist, claimed at Nuremberg that up to 7,000 political opponents were killed by the SA during in the first year of Nazi rule, McDonough lowers the figure to 1,000.[21](#) He also points out that most of the Gestapo were veteran civil servants who tried to restrain the SA.[22](#)

There are several issues here: (1) This autonomous action by the SA, in conflict with other sections of the party and state, is an indication of the manner in which the Hitler regime was not as totalitarian as supposed and was plagued by factionalism with the personality of Hitler holding disparate elements together even throughout the war. (2) Diels’s testimony at Nuremberg as to the number of SA victims, disputed by McDonough, is an example of the flawed testimony of the proceedings. Why then believe any of it without subjecting the whole lot to scrutiny and doubt?

The Communist Party had its own stormtroopers, the Red Front Fighters League. The fighting between the Nazis and the Reds was a bloody affair. Even the police casualties (1928-1932) from Communist violence resulted in 11 dead and 1,121 injured. Over the same period the Nazi casualties from Red violence were 128 Nazis killed and 19,769 injured.²³ That SA vengeance resulting in perhaps 1,000 dead Communists seems remarkably restrained given the years of conflict.

Punishments

In August 1933 Göring had curtailed the SA and disbanded the “auxiliary police,” strict regulations were enforced, and the Gestapo, supported by the police, were the only agencies empowered with “protective custody.” Hans Frank, the Minister of Justice at Munich, was among the most vocal against SA maltreatment of opponents. The SS took control of the concentration camps. There was a strict code for the treatment of internees. A case of two opponents being maltreated and sent to the Oranienburg concentration camp by the Gestapo in Berlin resulted in an investigation that found against the Gestapo.²⁴ One might wonder what this epitome of the terror state was doing investigating maltreatment of two opponents by the state political police? Such a procedure must have been unusual for any state in 1933, or today for that matter.



Hermann Göring appoints Heinrich Himmler as head of the Gestapo. Photo April 1934. Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-R96954 / CC-BY-SA 3.0 [CC BY-SA 3.0 de (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/deed.en>)], via Wikimedia Commons

With scrutiny from Frick, amidst allegations of mistreatment in the concentration camps, Himmler lectured the Gestapo in October 1934 that with their powers of protective custody they should ensure that all cases are handled speedily and efficiently, with courtesy, and that no loyal citizen should fear arrest.²⁵ In 1935 the Gestapo was given jurisdiction over the concentration camps, although they continued to be run by the SS.

Opposition groups were investigated as to their threat to the national community. McDonough states that concentration camp numbers until the outbreak of the war did not expand greatly. By the time of the declaration of war, 21,400 prisoners were held in six camps.²⁶ Those put under protective custody

were rarely subjected to torture. The justice ministry frequently reminded the Gestapo that there were severe punishments for the ill-treatment of prisoners.[27](#)

The most commonly used sanctioned punishment was up to 25 strokes to the buttocks with a bamboo cane, in the presence of a doctor. McDonough alludes to allegations that unofficial punishment included plunging a person into a bath of cold water until nearly asphyxiated, exhaustion exercises and sleep deprivation, crushing testicles, electrical currents through the hands, penis and anus, hanging up prisoners.[28](#) Whatever the accuracy of the allegations such torture was neither unique to the Gestapo nor widespread.

How then did the Gestapo and broader Nazi official attitudes towards punishment compare to the democracies? Not only was corporal punishment being used by the legal systems of the democracies during the Nazi era but has continued. It might be kept in mind also that this includes times of peace where the punishments are inflicted often on adolescents for minor offenses; not on Communist thugs or wartime spies and saboteurs. In Britain corporal punishment was abolished in 1948 but, with permission of the Home Secretary, could be meted out as punishment for assaulting prison staff until that was abolished in 1967.[29](#) In Australia individual states could administer corporal punishment, including the “cat,” which was still being used on adult offenders in South Australia up to the 1950s.[30](#) In Canada corporal punishment on prisoners was abolished in 1972. In 1929 there were 78 floggings by order of the courts, and 72 strappings for breaches of prison discipline. In 1935 the figures were 40 and 50 respectively. In New Zealand judicial whipping for boys under 16 was last used in 1935, and was abolished in 1941.[31](#) In Delaware, USA, a public mass whipping in 1932 was watched by thousands. The law was abolished in 1972. In Baltimore whippings in jail were carried out “privately” before an invited audience. In Maryland a flogging in 1940 was carried out in public with a cat-o’-nine-tails.[32](#) In 1936 in Chicago three youths convicted of a \$10 robbery “were given five lashes with a double five foot length of three-quarter inch rubber hose in the Chamber of the Boys’ Court.”[33](#)

“Advanced interrogation” techniques have been a feature of democratic states to the present time, although it is the Third Reich, and specifically the Gestapo, that have become synonymous with torture. Torture was used on a wide scale after the war by the Allies to extract confessions from German prisoners. The trial of the defendants of the “Malmedy massacre” was notable for the interrogation techniques. The defendants had been accused of shooting American soldiers who had surrendered during the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall established a tribunal to investigate allegations of torture that had been brought to the attention of Senator Joseph McCarthy. The tribunal was headed by Gordon Simpson of the Texas Supreme Court, with Leroy van Roden, Pennsylvania judge, and Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Lawrence of the U.S. Army.[34](#) The Simpson Commission recommended the commutation of all death sentences of the Malmedy defendants.[35](#) While the Simpson Commission report was “bland,” van Roden returned to the USA fully endorsing the allegations that interrogators had subjected the defendants to beatings, including “blows to the genitals,” threats of hanging during interrogations, and refusal of water.[36](#) Willis M. Everett, appointed by the U.S. Army as chief defense counsel, was uneasy about the number of Jews who were involved in the war crimes process.[37](#)

A “secret torture prison” was operated at Bad Nenndorf in northwest Germany by the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC), a division of the British War Office. The center of the

township was emptied of people and surrounded with barbed wire. At night the villagers could hear the screams of the prisoners. Most of the interrogators were “German-Jewish refugees.”[38](#)

Another “secret center” was operated in London where German POW’s could be held and tortured without the knowledge of the Red Cross. In 2005, at the request of *The Guardian* newspaper, documents were declassified showing the extent of the torture against Germans after the war. The documents refer to “living skeletons,” tortured, beaten and exposed to extreme cold. The prisoners expanded from being members of the Nazi party and the SS to anyone who had succeeded under the Third Reich. They even included Germans who had escaped from the Russian zone and offered to spy for the British. They were tortured – one dying – to determine whether they were sincere. A former diplomat incarcerated at Bad Nenndorf was there because he knew too much about the interrogation techniques, while another was there for eight months due to a clerical error. Apart from physical brutalities, threats to kill a prisoner’s wife and children were accepted techniques of interrogation. An anti-Nazi who had spent two years in Gestapo custody stated he had never experienced such brutality as he had at Bad Nenndorf.[39](#)

Church and State

McDonough states that the Nazi regime was determined to limit the influence of Christianity. Himmler and Heydrich were both inimical towards Christianity. However, Steigmann-Gall states in *The Holy Reich* that Hitler sought a unified state church, akin to Britain’s Anglican Church where the Monarch is at the head. He became disillusioned by the lack of unity among the denominations. [40](#) Despite the indirect measures by Himmler to dissuade the SS from church attendance and the efforts to create an alternative pagan SS religion, Germans remained overwhelmingly Christian, a matter alluded to by McDonough.[41](#)

There was strain between the State and the Catholic Church, as there had been since the *Kulturkampf* of Bismarck, and there was the antagonism towards the regime among Protestants centered in the Confessing Church. Given Germany as the home of the Reformation, and the *Kulturkampf* of the late 19th century against Catholicism, the conflict between the Church and the Nazi regime could be seen as a German rather than as a specifically National Socialist issue.

In 1933, 40 percent of the ministers of the Evangelical Church representing Lutherans and Calvinists, were *NSDAP* members.[42](#) A Nazified Christianity organized as the Evangelical Reich Church had majority support among Protestants. They were opposed by a minority headed by the celebrated Martin Niemöller who, far from being anti-Nazi, welcomed Hitler’s assumption to power, but opposed the Nazification of theology. In 1937, to deal with opposition among the religious, section IV-B was created within the Gestapo. McDonough notes that the Gestapo were slow to act against clergymen regardless of their anti-government sermons. When they did act it was often due to complaints from the public. It was “extremely rare” for cases to reach trial. The Gestapo acted with “great caution” on complaints against clergy. A “fair trial was the norm, not the exception.” Niemöller was held in protective custody in 1937 after four years of anti-Nazi polemics. In 1938 a special court found Niemöller not guilty, but Hitler personally intervened, regarding him as the focus of anti-Nazi activity. He survived the war in Sachsenhausen and Dachau.[43](#) Nonetheless the Confessing Church was not banned, and continued even during the war to submit criticism of the State.[44](#)

In 1936, 200 Franciscan monks were accused of sexually abusing children, and 1000 priests and monks were allegedly awaiting trial in 1937.⁴⁵ Given the widespread allegations across the world of child sexual abuse among priests and brothers within the Church over the past few decades, one might look on these accusations in Nazi Germany with mixed feelings. The mass media of today's democracies seem keen to sensationalize alleged abuse among the Catholic clergy, while there is scant reporting of alleged abuse among other religions. The most underreported of all seems to be that taking place within Judaism.⁴⁶ Is the Church today being targeted as it was by Nazi Germany, but for aims and by interests quite different?⁴⁷

At any rate, church attendance actually increased under the Nazis. Hess pointed out "a religion that has influence, indeed dominated, the life of the people for two thousand years cannot be overcome by external measures and certainly not by superficial ridicule." In September 1939 church leaders declared their total commitment to German victory,⁴⁸ but those such as Heydrich maintained their anti-church position. In 1939 the biggest confrontation between the regime and the church involved euthanasia, and it was an issue that saw the regime backing off. In 1941 actions against the church were officially discontinued, but suspicion remained as to loyalties. The aim was to keep the church from exercising its prior political influence.⁴⁹

An easier target was the Jehovah's Witnesses, whose pacifism and refusal to bend to any earthly authority was seen as subversive to morale. The attitude of the Nazis towards the JW's was no different from that of the democratic authorities. In 1935 the JW organization was banned.⁵⁰ They seem to have been the most troublesome and stubborn of inmates in the internment camps, refusing to stand to attention during roll call or work.⁵¹ However JW's were not herded up *en masse* and sent to camps. Their cases were individually reviewed, and they had the option of signing a statement of loyalty to the State. Sentences were of limited duration, but there was a shortsighted determination to try and force the JW's to renounce their faith, and some brutal consequences in the camps.

In the democracies the JW's were the first to be banned during the war. Being a member was sufficient to get one interned or jailed. They were sent to internment camps along with other Christians opposed to conscription. The New Zealand Marxist writer Murray Horton states that up to 12 detention camps were established in the North Island of New Zealand for pacifists.⁵² Up to 800 conscientious objectors were interned or jailed for the duration of the war, according to Horton. Seventy-eight were JW's. JW's were banned in Australia in 1941, as was the Communist Party.⁵³ In Canada hundreds of Jehovah's Witnesses were arrested. John Diefenbaker, Canadian civil-liberties lawyer, politician and post-war prime minister, stated that about 500 JW's had been prosecuted for their membership.⁵⁴

Communists

There were 360,000 *KPD* members. The first year of the regime 60,000 were arrested and 2000 died.⁵⁵ The Nazi and Communist parties had been in a state of war since the start, and as alluded to previously, many Nazis had been killed and injured by the Communists. The SA had fought a tough battle with the Red Front. In the aftermath of World War I, prior to the formation of the Nazi party, and during its embryonic stages, the Communists had engaged in bloody uprisings and fought the State authorities.

McDonough mentions that on the day Hitler assumed the chancellorship, the Communist Party issued a call for mass strikes. Ernst Thälmann, head of the Communist Party, continued to call for revolution. In July 1933, half a year after Hitler's chancellorship, Communists killed two SA men in a street fight in

Cologne.⁵⁶ The Communist Party was not immediately outlawed, even in the aftermath of the Reichstag Fire. The Gestapo started the suppression of Communist literature in earnest in 1934.

The previous year Thälmann had already been taken into “protective custody,” and wound up in Buchenwald. McDonough repeats the usual claim that Thälmann was executed there in August 1944, having been kept in solitary confinement.⁵⁷ At the time the Allies were bombing Buchenwald and hundreds of internees died. The official claim was that Thälmann had died in a bombing raid. While Thälmann was lauded as a martyr in post-war Soviet Germany there are several inconsistencies in the official version of his martyrdom and even as to the camp at which he died. What is curious is a passing allusion to Thälmann by Paul Rassinier, French pacifist leader, interned at Buchenwald and Dora. He mentions that he briefly encountered Thälmann at Buchenwald when he “felt a terrible blow,” having been distracted by a conversation and straying a little from a line of internees. Someone explained: “You could have been more careful; that’s Thälmann.”⁵⁸ From this bare mention it seems that Thälmann was a *Kapo*.

Rassinier states that the internment camps quickly became self-governing and there was rivalry for control among the “greens” or common criminals” and the “reds” or political prisoners. Lt. Col. Donald B. Robinson, chief historian for the U.S. Military Government in Germany, wrote of a U.S. Army report on Buchenwald:

The U. S. Army probe uncovered detailed evidence that a band of three hundred German Communist prisoners had seized control of a self-government system set up by the Nazis among the inmates of Buchenwald, and had then employed it to command and terrorize the camp population. The Communists’ victims were numbered in the thousands... It appeared that prisoners who agreed with the Communists ate; those who didn’t starved to death. Those who openly opposed the Communists were beaten, tortured or killed. It was stated categorically by the Army report that: “The Communist trustees were directly responsible for a large part of the brutalities committed at Buchenwald Not all the beatings and killings were done by the SS guards.” A list of German Communist trustees who committed such acts was compiled by the Army. At the head of it was a man named Hauptmann, who was the Assistant Camp Chief (Kontrolleur). Of him, the report asserted: ⁵⁹

Eye-witness testifies that Hauptmann kicked prisoners in the testicles and beat them but always stopped when under observation of certain individuals known to have connections outside the camp. Hauptmann speaks English well. He talks like a sadist, his eyes gleaming with pleasure as he tells how ‘we disciplined this camp.’ Like many of the Communist leaders, ‘discipline’ is his favorite word.⁶⁰

An interesting aside is the mention that in 1943 Polish inmates who had run Auschwitz were transferred to Buchenwald. They tried to assume the same position, and were killed by the Communist faction.⁶¹

The hospital staff at Buchenwald was composed “almost 100 percent” of German Communists. The camp elder and his deputy were Communists. Most of the drugs and food went to Communist Party patients. The Labour Office, Food Supply and Property Room were also under Communist control. Communists controlled the distribution of Red Cross food parcels. When the U.S. Army entered the camp they found the 300 remaining German Communists “dressed like prosperous businessmen.”⁶² An unseen directorate of the Communist Party gave instructions to the Communist Buchenwald trustees. These directives were received from the Communist Party which retained an underground network throughout Germany. A courier travelled out of Buchenwald to receive party directives. It was

discovered in September 1944 that the Buchenwald Communists were part of a plot to overthrow Hitler.⁶³ If Thälmann was executed several weeks previously, perhaps the time frame is sufficient to consider that he was found to be one of the plot leaders.

The German Communists were despised even by the Soviet POWs and other Communists. When the camp was taken by the Americans, these comrades sought a measure of revenge through beatings. Further retaliation was prevented by the Communists, who had stolen guns and grenades, which they used to drive out the SS guards and dominate the other internees until the Americans arrived.⁶⁴

One might imagine what Germany would have been like had Thälmann and his party defeated Hitler. Stalin did not think much of the prospect either. While five members of the party Politburo were executed by the Nazis, in the “refuge” of the USSR seven were liquidated; and 41 of the 68 party leaders.⁶⁵ McDonough adds “70 percent of the German Communist exiles were killed in Stalin’s brutal political purges.” McDonough also states the “irony” of Stalin having killed more Communist leaders than Hitler. He saw them as internationalists and Trotskyites.⁶⁶

In Germany, however, with Communists as with those accused of other anti-state activities, the Gestapo investigations sought to arrive quickly and efficiently at the truth, mindful that informants might be motivated by personal vendettas. McDonough’s book largely contains personal accounts among whom were those accused of Communist sympathies, who were quickly exonerated or were given short custodial sentences.⁶⁷ The example of Peter Penk, a petty troublemaker, thief, vandal, smuggler, and drunk-driver causing bodily harm, given to making pro-Communist, anti-Hitler remarks when drunk, is one which McDonough describes as being treated with “remarkable leniency by the Gestapo over a long period.” He was drafted into the army.⁶⁸ McDonough also refers to the lenient treatment given to a Communist group attempting to disrupt defense work in 1938 by bullying other workers, resulting in short prison sentences.⁶⁹ Another case of youthful delinquency at a factory, seeming to point to Communist activism, wasted “an enormous amount of time” for the Gestapo, but resulted in their release from jail within a few days and all charges dropped.⁷⁰ The Gestapo found that the parents were decent working-class folk living on unemployment benefits. Even during the war there were those who continued repeatedly to make pro-Communist and defeatist statements in public who were treated leniently because they did not pose any serious threat to the “national community.”

Illicit relations

The Gestapo spent a great deal of time investigating alleged forbidden sexual liaisons between Germans and foreign workers during the war. It might be contended that this was at least partly to prevent abuse of foreign workers in a vulnerable situation by Germans. McDonough states that while public humiliation might involve being put in a town pillory, “far more typical” was a private warning.⁷¹

McDonough refers to a Jewish man being paraded through the streets in Würzburg for having sexual relations with a German woman, after complaints from residents. The man had to wear a sign reading “I have lived out of wedlock with a German woman.” He was placed in “protective custody for two weeks.⁷²

Such situations hardly compare in the aftermath of the war, with the thousands of women who had their heads shaved, were stripped, some carrying babies, paraded through the streets, assaulted and sometimes killed as “collaborators.” The then-famous author and journalist Sisley Huddleston, who lived

in Vichy France for the duration of the war, observed that the “liberation” period of 1944-1946 was the bloodiest in France’s history, far exceeding that of the Jacobin era. Huddleston estimates a minimal figure of 100,000 French men, women, and “even children” murdered during the “liberation” by fellow Frenchmen.⁷³ American service figures put the number of murdered at 80,000 “during the first months” of “Liberation”. Adrian Tixier, minister of the interior, put the number at 105,000 during August 1944 to March 1945. ⁷⁴ Communists of various nationalities in France cut with razors and burned with cigarettes their victims, beat them with cowhide whips, and scalded their feet. “There were many cases of rape.” Those who died from torture were tossed from windows, and called suicides.⁷⁵

Wartime policing

Another role of the Gestapo was the investigation of sabotage and subversion among foreign workers. German Communists were active among them. McDonough states that “all the Gestapo cases we’ve looked at involving alleged communists were investigated thoroughly and exhaustively. Numerous witnesses were brought in for questioning. Each case was treated with professional diligence and efficiency.”⁷⁶ The seriousness of each case was based on its individual character, and the most-severe were placed in “protective custody.” The picture that emerges, even during war, was that people were not routinely herded *en masse* and sent to concentration camps on flimsy pretexts. If someone was held in custody he or she could expect to be released within a few days if an efficient investigation found them innocent or the matter trivial.

McDonough estimates that 26 per cent of all Gestapo cases started with denunciation from a member of the public, and 15 per cent as a result of Gestapo surveillance. Most denouncers were working-class, 20 per cent were women, and a lot of the latter involved domestic issues, many resulting from a personal conflict with a neighbor, relative or husband. The Gestapo became “adept” at discovering the motive. The denouncer was seldom prosecuted for making false accusations.⁷⁷ So far from meaning a sentence of death, McDonough states that sentences for anti-Nazi slurs were one to six months’ imprisonment.⁷⁸ “Contrary to the popular assumption, there was not a flood of denunciations.”⁷⁹ The Gestapo handled accusations against normally law-abiding individuals “with professional diligence and often surprising compassion.” “It was not even unusual” for individuals to formally complain if they regarded Gestapo actions as “high handed.” ⁸⁰ Civil complaints could be heard in court.

Conditions became stricter with the advent of war. Although one might be jailed for up to two years for listening to a foreign broadcast, one might instead be named and shamed in the local press. Again cases came usually from public information, not Gestapo surveillance.⁸¹ McDonough refers to a case where the Gestapo officer acted with “understanding and compassion” in persuading an informant to drop a complaint prompted by someone’s drunken bravado.⁸²

One of the most bizarre cases was that of an unemployed alcoholic laborer, Adam Lipper, who in 1940 walked into a Gestapo office and asked to be interned for six months, to cure his alcoholism. He wanted to be a valuable member of the national community. He was released after seven weeks, having assessed himself cured.⁸³

As the war entered the phase of German defeat, the situation became harsher, with some rather trivial cases of “looting” bombed-out houses resulting in death sentences, yet only a minority of cases went to court, and of those only a minority succeeded in conviction. “Gestapo brutality is almost entirely absent”

in cases of denunciation of ordinary citizens. The Gestapo was an organization “that the law-abiding public felt it could trust.”[84](#)

“Social outsiders”

The Gestapo was obliged to become increasingly active in the containment of “social outsiders,” who were defined mainly on their sociopathic character traits and inability to contribute to the “national community.” McDonough refers to the “eugenic” character of Nazi attitudes in this regard. However, he points out that at the time eugenics was a scientifically reputable and widespread movement, with eugenic laws in Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden (until 1975) and the USA, that focused on sterilizing “asocial” elements.[85](#) Again, this was not a matter of wildly condemning individuals *en masse*. Each case was individually investigated through Hereditary Health Courts, and on the recommendation of two physicians and a lawyer. There were also eighteen appeal courts, although most appeals were unsuccessful.[86](#)

Castration for repeat sex offenders, rapists and pedophiles was common, resulting in large decreases in those crimes. For habitual criminals after more than two convictions, the third was a life sentence. Although strict treatment for petty crime was not successful,[87](#) there were large reductions for repeat offending and the overall crime rate.[88](#)

The “asocial” element of habitual criminals in 1942 began to be worked to death in what McDonough calls “yet another example of the broad genocide policy being carried out by the Nazi regime.”[89](#) The “work-shy,” those who had, being fit for work, quit two jobs without reason, and refused employment, started to be interned in 1938 as forced labor. McDonough claims that they could be the subjects of medical experiments.[90](#)

In the USA medical experiments were conducted on a large scale before, during and after the Nazi era. The most well-known is that of the U.S. Public Health Service study of untreated syphilis among 400 Negroes in Tuskegee, Alabama, for forty years (1932-1972). They were deceived into thinking they were receiving treatment, but the aim was to let syphilis take its fatal course. Allan M. Brandt states:

The subjects of the study were never told they were participating in an “experiment.” Treatment that could have cured them was deliberately withheld, and many of the men were prevented from seeing physicians who could have helped them. As a result, scores of people died painful deaths, others became permanently blind or insane, and the children of several were born with congenital syphilis.[91](#)

Another study on syphilis was undertaken by the U.S. in Guatemala among 696 unwitting prison inmates, mental patients and residents of an army barracks, infected for the purpose, during 1946-1948:

The doctors used prostitutes with the disease to pass it to the prisoners (since sexual visits were allowed by law in Guatemalan prisons) and then did direct inoculations made from syphilis bacteria poured onto the men’s penises or on forearms and faces that were slightly abraded when the “normal exposure” produced little disease, or in a few cases through spinal punctures. Unlike in Alabama, the subjects were then given penicillin after they contracted the illness. However, whether everyone was then cured is not clear and not everyone received what was even then considered adequate treatment.[92](#)

As for being worked to death as part of a genocidal program, after the war the use of German POWs as slave labor became wide-scale in the Allied states. German internees were not classified as POWs since

the war ended with unconditional surrender. A notable feature was their use to clear minefields. In France where 740,000 prisoners had been transferred by the USA, French authorities estimated that 2,000 a month were being maimed or killed.⁹³ In Norway, according to Professor Anders Gokstad, by the end of August 1945 275 German prisoners had been killed clearing mines, and 392 maimed. Initially victims did not receive hospital attention.⁹⁴

American military historian Dr. S. P. MacKenzie writes that “callous self-interest and a desire for retribution” motivated the use of forced labor of German prisoners who were sick and malnourished.⁹⁵ The French journal *Figaro* wrote that “In certain camps... living skeletons may be seen, almost like those in German concentration camps, and deaths of undernourishment are numerous. We learn that prisoners have been savagely and systematically beaten and that some have been employed in removing mines without protection equipment...”⁹⁶ Louis Clair wrote of an Orleans camp where the commander received 16 francs per head for food, but spent nine francs for himself, so prisoners were kept starving. A young French soldier wrote of prisoners dying of hunger, sleeping on cold cement floors, without shelter. At a camp in Langres a witness wrote of seeing prisoners beaten with rifle butts and kicked when they broke down through overwork.⁹⁷ As Bacque has shown, Eisenhower’s idea of an internment camp was nothing so lavish as to include concrete floors. The U.S. camps were fields surrounded by fences, where shelter was whatever internees could dig out of the mud with their hands. Bacque estimates that 167,000 to 314,241 Germans soldiers died under French internment,⁹⁸ and at least 800,000 under U.S. internment.⁹⁹

Gypsies

Unsurprisingly, Gypsies were affected by Germany’s actions against vagabonds and other “asocial” elements. However, Gypsies were not treated in an undifferentiated manner, despite the references McDonough cites on the “Gypsy plague” etc. “Pure Gypsies” and travellers were exempted from internment at Auschwitz, which began in 1943. Those who agreed to sterilization were also exempted. They were in large part regarded as having descended from Aryans. Bormann opposed Himmler’s exemption policy and appealed to Hitler, who backed Himmler.¹⁰⁰ Carlo Mattogno gives a wider view of the Gypsy policies. He shows that there were wide criteria for exemptions from deportation, including Gypsies of pure race, good racial crossings, those who had fixed employment and accommodation, servicemen and ex-servicemen. Families who were deported were kept together. They were not forced to work and could keep their own clothes, valuables and money. There were efforts to maintain rations on the same level as those of German citizens. At the request of Dr. Mengele a nursery was established at Auschwitz and other facilities for children and mothers. ¹⁰¹

The categorization of Gypsies based on “blood purity” seems to have been a usual practice at the time, not limited to Nazi racial theory. A present-day commentator observes:

*Crucially, for these stereotypes to find resonance in modern Britain, gypsiologists constructed a theory around the decline in the racial purity of Gypsies as they increasingly mixed and married with ‘degenerate’ members of the settled population. They developed a racial hierarchy which placed ‘pure-blooded’ Gypsies, who were believed to speak the best Romany, at the top; followed by ‘didikais’, half-breeds, or ‘pikies’ – groups with varying proportions of Gypsy blood depending on which source one reads; and ‘mumpers’, who were vagrants with no Romany ancestry, at the bottom.*¹⁰²

Jewish issues

McDonough states that German Jews were so assimilated into Germany that 44 per cent were married to Gentiles. He mentions the high proportion of Jews who fought in World War I and the amazing proportion of those who received valor awards.[103](#) As I have documented elsewhere, most German Jews rejected Zionism as much as they rejected Communism. Many were avid German nationalists.[104](#) There could have been an accord between German Jews and the Third Reich based on a genuine symbiosis. Zionists did their utmost to prevent this, and worked with the Nazis in opposing assimilation. Between Nazi race doctrine and Jewish race doctrine there was a commonality of aims. [105](#)

McDonough alludes to the influence Jews had within Germany as something more tangible than Nazi “scapegoating.” Among the statistics he cites is that in 1928 80 percent of the leading members of Berlin’s stock exchange were Jewish.[106](#) Arguably of more significance than the proportion of Jewish physicians, businessmen, and bankers, were the Jews conspicuous as leaders of not only Marxism, but of the filth and decay of the Weimar era, the promoters of what the Nazis called “cultural degeneracy” in the arts and theatre, and new social experiments that offended traditional morality. Nahum Goldmann, a leader of World Zionism stated, “in literature they were represented by illustrious names. The theatre was largely in their hands. The daily press.... was owned or controlled by them.”[107](#)

Heydrich is quoted as saying that younger generations of Jews must be induced to leave. Normal life became increasingly restrictive.[108](#) “The first concrete measure against Jews” was a one-day boycott on Jewish shops on April 1, 1933.[109](#) Apart from some menacing behavior in the streets by the SA, McDonough does not state much happening of a serious nature. The boycott was organized, according to Dr. Goebbels, to dissuade world Jewry from its propaganda campaign against Germany, in the hope that if they saw their brethren in Germany being economically pinched they would desist.[110](#) At this time, Goebbels refers to the “horror propaganda” against Germany. The references are confirmed by Samuel Untermyer’s allegations of “starvation,” “torture” and “annihilation” in his August boycott speech cited below. The “atrocious propaganda” had been directed against Germany as soon as Hitler assumed the chancellorship. Goebbels on the eve of the boycott refers to “many” among the National Socialists being “downhearted and apprehensive,” believing that the boycott would lead to war. He writes that the boycott will stop after a day in the hope that “the stories of horrors cease abroad.”[111](#) Driving around the streets, he observed “perfect discipline” among the public and the SA.[112](#) Within several days Goebbels referred to the “horrors propaganda” abroad being “perceptibly lessened.” The cabinet therefore decided not to resume the boycott.[113](#)

In comparison to the one-day boycott, the leaders of world Jewry had in August 1933 not only organized an international boycott of Germany, but declared themselves “at war.” Samuel Untermyer, after returning to the USA from a tour of Europe during which he attended the World Economic Conference at Amsterdam, which was organizing the international boycott, stated on Station WABC, carried by the press around the world, that this was a “holy war.” He referred to Jews in Germany being slaughtered, starved and annihilated, and “of terrors worse than death.” An “economic boycott against all German goods, shipping and services.” Untermyer claimed that there was an ongoing boycott of Jewish shops in Germany, that “hundreds” of Jewish shopkeepers were being paraded through the streets and jailed, “starving and torturing them in vile concentration camps.” Untermyer alluded for comparison to the phony atrocities in Belgium of which Germany had been accused during World War I. He aimed to revive the allegations. Aspects of his talk in 1933 read like a script for the atrocity stories that have continued unremittingly against Germany ever since. It seems as though the “atrocious propaganda” of World War I was being resurrected within the first year of Hitler’s chancellorship to instigate a “holy war.” Not only

should German products be boycotted, but “you must refuse to deal with any merchant or shopkeeper who sells any German-made goods or who patronizes German ships or shipping.” Those Jews who continued to patronize German shops should have “their names heralded far and wide [as] traitors to their race.”[114](#)

However, the boycott campaign had started prior to the Untermyer announcement. The Zionist Association of Germany had on March 26 1933 telegraphed leading American Jews protesting against “the anti-German propaganda, “the mendacious atrocity reports and reckless sensational news,” being used for political purposes by “other states and groups.”[115](#) Two days earlier the American Jewish Congress convened to organize “a national program of highly visible protests, parades, and demonstrations, culminating in a “giant anti-Nazi rally” at Madison Square Garden on March 27,[116](#) with others through the USA.[117](#) The Jewish War Veterans, with the backing of the American Jewish Congress staged a boycott march on March 23. They were backed by the American Federation of Labor, the British Labor Party and trades unions.[118](#) In London placards proclaiming “Boycott German Goods” “spread infectiously,” and were in the windows of most exclusive West End shops. Automobiles adorned with banners cruised through the retail areas. “Everywhere store signs warned German salesmen not to enter.” British Catholics were urged to join the protest by the Archbishop of Liverpool.[119](#) Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the most eminent Jewish leader in the USA, told Germany’s Jewish leaders that despite their pleas, the agitation would continue, regardless of conditions in Germany.[120](#) Simultaneous with the U.S. rallies, mass boycott meetings were held throughout Poland. In London teenagers patrolled the streets to enforce the boycott, and in the USA East Coast stores were picketed. “And a steady publicity program was being well received by the U.S. media.”[121](#) Such was the embargo that the prestigious Dresdner Bank, writing to France’s Societe General Bank of the false stories about Germany, was rudely rebuffed.[122](#) That month the Reichsbank could not so much as raise a RM 40 million loan from London banks; the *Investor’s Review* of 5 August confidently predicted the end of the Hitler regime before the New Year.[123](#)

The comments by Goebbels about “horror propaganda” were apparently no exaggeration. What he seems to have misstated is that after Germany’s response of a one-day boycott, the Germanophobia perceptibly decreased. Rather, when Reichsbank President Schacht went to the USA in May 1933, there was an anti-Nazi tumult. He realized that the anti-German propaganda and boycott would not only continue but would spread.[124](#) Edwin Black, a Jewish academic, a son of “survivors,” writes that the boycott movement encouraged Polish militarists who wanted to invade Germany. No amount of threats or conciliation by Germany was working. The boycott movement was spread from Argentina to Australia. Germany faced a replay of the starvation of Winter 1919, when there had been an economic blockade. The boycott slogan was “Germany will crack this winter.”[125](#)

While Untermyer et al were conducting a “horrors propaganda” campaign throughout the world from the start of the Hitler regime claiming Jews were being tortured, starved and annihilated, McDonough states that “contrary to popular myth, the Gestapo did not place a high priority on persecuting law-abiding Jews in the first two years of Hitler’s rule.” In Krefeld City, eight Jews were arrested during 1933, and seven of those were communist activists.

Matters escalated in 1935 with increasing restrictions on Jews. That year the Nuremberg Laws were enacted.[126](#) Jews were divided by the Nuremberg Laws into full-Jews (*Volljuden*) and half-Jews (*Mischlinge*). Oddly for a regime based on race purity as an ideal, and moreover one supposedly intent

on exterminating the Jewish race, the part-Jews were not interned; nor were Jewish partners in mixed marriages.¹²⁷ However, the Nuremberg Laws did make sexual relations between Jews and “Aryans” illegal, and the Gestapo was responsible for investigating “race defilement” allegations.¹²⁸ The usual sentence was an 18-month prison term. Three people were required to corroborate a charge for it to proceed, keeping the number of cases proceeding low.¹²⁹ However, in 1938 Jews who had been arrested for breaching the Nuremberg Laws were ordered rearrested. The assassination of a German diplomat in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan in November 1938 unleashed anti-Semitic reactions throughout Germany, the so-called *Kristallnacht*. Although ten thousand Jews were sent to concentration camps, most were released within six weeks.¹³⁰ While the extent of *Kristallnacht* has been disputed by revisionists, it seems reasonable to expect that measures would become increasingly strident to encourage Jews to leave, and McDonough states that after this regulations increased as did the “exodus” of Jews departing.¹³¹ McDonough states that it was Heydrich who insisted that Jews be deported from the Old Reich, as ghettos in Germany would breed disease and crime. The Gestapo organized the deportations with the assistance of the local Jewish community leaders.¹³² In February 1943, when 1700 Jewish men married to German women were going to be deported from Berlin and their wives protested, they were released on the order of Goebbels, as *gauleiter* of the city.¹³³

Lamentations

McDonough, having disposed of most of the primary assumptions, concludes by lamenting that, despite being classified as a “criminal organization” along with the SS and SD, the Gestapo largely avoided the victor’s vengeance. However, McDonough alludes to the testimony of Dr. Werner Best, head of Gestapo administration and personnel in Berlin during 1936 to 1940. “It was Werner Best who originally shattered the myths surrounding the Gestapo, many years before historians ever dealt with the subject in detail.” In what McDonough calls a “revisionist interpretation” of the Gestapo, he states that Best’s testimony was clearly laid out. He stated that the Gestapo were the most poorly paid of the police, that they were understaffed, and half of those were in administration, that the impression of the Gestapo as a vast organization spying on the mass of Germans is incorrect. Gestapo agents were continually in contact with the families of inmates, who were kept informed about release dates. Gestapo officers advised families on welfare benefit entitlements while relatives were in custody. “Advanced interrogation techniques” were only used in serious cases of treason, under strict guidelines, and confessions were not extorted under questioning.¹³⁴

Karl-Heinz Hoffmann, a senior manager of the Gestapo, stated that protective custody was kept brief, internment to a concentration camp was recommended only for the most incorrigible, dangerous cases. Brutal treatment and torture were strictly prohibited. Cases of brutality went to criminal court. Hoffmann cited cases of two Gestapo officers in Düsseldorf who were sent to prison by a criminal court for mistreating prisoners. In Denmark, where Hoffmann later served with Werner Best, who was governor, Hoffmann stated that “enhanced interrogations” were used more frequently against the resistance, but even here were not extensive.¹³⁵ The defense counsel was “very ably handled by Dr. Rudolf Merkel.”¹³⁶ Nonetheless the Nuremberg judgment maintained that the Gestapo was a criminal organization, and that Gestapo employees other than those in minor roles, were complicit. However, no collective, follow-up trial of the Gestapo was held. Most Gestapo officers were exonerated.

McDonough seems to regard the Allied occupation regime, the era of the Morgenthau Plan, as lenient. Many Gestapo officers were intent on clearing their names, but faced the testimony of their victims.

That these victims might simply lie does not seem to be entertained by McDonough. However, even those who were prosecuted received a few years' prison and were exonerated when released. The West German courts during 1945-1950 "only" convicted 5,228 defendants.¹³⁷ Also lamentable for McDonough is that insufficient numbers of denouncers have been convicted.¹³⁸

With the advent of the Cold War era the democratic Allies sought Germans as frontline cannon fodder against the USSR, and stopped pursuing the Morgenthau vision of a vanishing Germany through de-industrialization and starvation.¹³⁹ McDonough accepts the *DDR* as having more vigorously pursued Nazis, the Soviets making much of themselves as a bulwark against a revival of Nazism in Germany. Matters changed in 1960 when Eichmann was brought to trial in Israel, and this gave an impetus for the reinvigoration of war-crimes investigations.

McDonough concludes with the lamentation that Werner Best avoided trial after previously having served time in jail and being fined 70,000 RM. Since he was ill, the West German authorities adjourned his case in 1972. He died in 1989 "having never paid for his extensive crimes against humanity during the Nazi era. Nor did the Gestapo."¹⁴⁰ After reading McDonough's book, however, one might be left with the question: what "extensive crimes"?

In writing the book it was not McDonough's brief to examine the Gestapo and the Nazi era in the context of the times. Few, if any, books have done this. The aim of this article has been to show that what was inhumane about Nazism was not unique to it. Race laws, eugenics, sterilization of criminals and homosexuals, forced labor, corporal punishment, internment of enemy aliens, jailing of the political opposition, medical experiments, etc., have been common in democracies across the world before, during and after the Nazi era. More unique to the Third Reich were the innovations in social welfare, animal welfare, ecology, organic food and public health, banking, and public housing that have been left largely unknown due to the inordinate fetish with alleged Nazi sadism. While the USA and others profited after the war from the appropriation of German weapons technology, no similar interest was shown in research undertaken on cancer during the Nazi era, for example. The smokescreen of atrocity propaganda, which has not abated since 1933, has enabled such one-sided treatment. The image of the Gestapo has been a primary factor in this obfuscation. McDonough's book joins a growing number of scholarly works from mainstream historians and publishers that throws "revisionist" light on some aspects of the subject.

Notes:

- ¹ Robert N. Proctor, *The Nazi War on Cancer* (Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- ² McDonough, pp. 1-2.
- ³ *Ibid*, p. 4.
- ⁴ *Ibid*.
- ⁵ *Ibid*, p. 5.

- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid, p. 7.
- 8 Ibid, p. 9.
- 9 Ibid, p. 11.
- 10 Adam Zamoyski, *Phantom Terror: The Threat of Revolution and the Suppression of Liberty 1789-1848* (London: William Collins, 2014).
- 11 McDonough, p. 12.
- 12 Ibid, p. 43.
- 13 Ibid, p. 45.
- 14 Ibid, p. 48.
- 15 Ibid, p. 49.
- 16 Ibid, p. 51.
- 17 Ibid, p. 52.
- 18 Ibid, p. 54.
- 19 Ibid, p. 20.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid, p. 21.
- 22 Ibid, p. 20.
- 23 Major Francis Yeats-Brown, *European Jungle* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1939), p. 146.
- 24 Ibid, p. 22.
- 25 Ibid, p. 39.
- 26 Ibid, p. 54.
- 27 Ibid, p. 57.
- 28 Ibid, p. 58.
- 29 World Corporal Punishment Research., <http://www.corpun.com/counukj.htm>

- [30](#) Online: <http://www.corpun.com/counauj.htm>
- [31](#) Online: <http://www.corpun.com/rules2.htm>
- [32](#) Online: <http://www.corpun.com/13archive/usj01307.htm#24577>
- [33](#) "Use rubber hose to whip youth for \$10 robbery," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 24, 1936.
- [34](#) James J. Weingartner, *Crossroads of Death: the Story of the Malmedy Massacre and Trial*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 190.
- [35](#) Ibid, p. 193.
- [36](#) Ibid, p. 194.
- [37](#) Ibid, p. 169.
- [38](#) Ian Cobain, "Britain's Secret Torture Chamber: The Interrogation Centre that Turned Prisoners into Living Skeletons," *The Guardian*, December 17, 2005, <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2005/dec/17/secondworldwar.topstories?guni=Article:in%20body%20link>
- [39](#) Ibid.
- [40](#) Richard Steigmann-Gall, *The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity 1919-1945* (Cambridge University press, 2003).
- [41](#) McDonough, p. 92.
- [42](#) Ibid, p. 63.
- [43](#) Ibid, pp. 66-67.
- [44](#) Ibid, p. 68.
- [45](#) Ibid, p. 75.
- [46](#) Sharon Otterman, "Ultra-Orthodox Shun Their Own for Reporting Child Sexual Abuse," *New York Times*, May 9, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/10/nyregion/ultra-orthodox-jews-shun-their-own-for-reporting-child-sexual-abuse.html>
- [47](#) See for example the comments by Monsignor Giacomo Babini in 2010: http://www.salon.com/2010/04/12/bishop_blames_pedophilia_jews_open2010/
- [48](#) McDonough, p. 79.
- [49](#) Ibid, p. 84.

- [50](#) Ibid, p. 85.
- [51](#) Ibid, p. 86.
- [52](#) Murray Horton, *Red Line*, July 20, 2011, <https://rdln.wordpress.com/2011/07/20/the-secret-history-of-ww2/>
- [53](#) R. Douglas, "Law War and Liberty: The World War II Subversion Prosecutions," *Melbourne University Law Review*, Vol. 27, 2003, p. 79.
- [54](#) Ibid, p. 107.
- [55](#) McDonough, p. 93.
- [56](#) Ibid, p. 97.
- [57](#) Ibid, p. 96.
- [58](#) Paul Rassinier, *Debunking the Genocide Myth* (Torrance, Cal.: Noontide Press, 1978), p. 32.
- [59](#) Donald B. Robinson, "The Communist Atrocities at Buchenwald," *American Mercury*, October 1946, pp. 397-404.
- [60](#) Ibid, citing U.S. Army report, p. 400.; <http://www.unz.org/Pub/AmMercury-1946oct-00397>
- [61](#) Ibid.
- [62](#) Ibid, p. 401.
- [63](#) Ibid, p. 402.
- [64](#) Ibid, p. 403.
- [65](#) Richard Overy: *The Dictators: Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia* (London: Allen Lane, 2004), p. 201.
- [66](#) McDonough, p. 99.
- [67](#) Ibid, p. 107.
- [68](#) Ibid, pp. 107-110.
- [69](#) Ibid, p. 113.
- [70](#) Ibid, p. 116.
- [71](#) Ibid, p. 125.

- [72](#) Ibid, p. 196.
- [73](#) Sisley Huddleston, *France The Tragic Years 1939-1947: An Eye-Witness Account on War, Occupation and Liberation* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1955), p. 297; <https://archive.org/stream/francethetragedy006833mbp#page/n15/mode/1up>
- [74](#) Ibid, p. 299.
- [75](#) Ibid, p. 318.
- [76](#) McDonough, p. 128.
- [77](#) Ibid, p. 130.
- [78](#) Ibid, p. 131.
- [79](#) Ibid, p. 132.
- [80](#) Ibid, p. 134.
- [81](#) Ibid, p. 144.
- [82](#) Ibid, p. 152.
- [83](#) Ibid, p. 155.
- [84](#) Ibid, p. 158.
- [85](#) Ibid, p. 162.
- [86](#) Ibid, p. 163.
- [87](#) Ibid, p. 169.
- [88](#) Ibid, p. 170.
- [89](#) Ibid, p. 171.
- [90](#) Ibid, p. 173.
- [91](#) Allan M. Brandt, "Racism and Research: The Case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study," *Hastings Center Magazine*, December 1978, The Hastings Center, Institute of Society, Ethics and the Life Sciences, New York; <http://www.med.navy.mil/bumed/Documents/Healthcare%20Ethics/Racism-And-Research.pdf>
- [92](#) Susan M. Reverby, "Normal Exposure' and Inoculation Syphilis: A PHS 'Tuskegee' Doctor in Guatemala, 1946-48," *Journal of Policy History*, Special Issue on Human Subjects January

2010; <http://academics.wellesley.edu/WomenSt/Synopsis%20Reverby%20%27Normal%20Exposure%27.pdf>

- [93](#) S. P. MacKenzie "The Treatment of Prisoners of War in World War II," *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 66, No. 3. (Sep., 1994), pp. 487–520.
- [94](#) Jonas Tjersland, "Tyske soldater brukt som mineryddere," April 9 2006, VG *Nyheter*, <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/bevegelser/tyske-soldater-brukt-som-mineryddere/a/166207/>
- [95](#) S. P. MacKenzie, op cit.
- [96](#) Quoted by Louis Clair in *The Progressive*, January 14 1946, p. 4; cited by Ralph Keeling, *Gruesome Harvest* ([1947] Reedy, W. Va.: Liberty Bell Publications, 1978), p. 21.
- [97](#) Louis Clair, cited by Keeling, pp. 21-22.
- [98](#) James Bacque, *Other Losses* (Toronto: Stoddard Publishing, 1989), p. 131
- [99](#) Ibid, p. 2.
- [100](#) McDonough, p. 187.
- [101](#) Carlo Mattogno, "Gypsy Holocaust? The Gypsies under the National Socialist Regime," *Inconvenient History* Vol. VI, 2014, pp. 14-15.
Online: http://inconvenienthistory.com/archive/2014/volume_6/number_1/gypsy_holocaust.php
- [102](#) Gypsies: (England) <http://www.historytoday.com/becky-taylor/britains-gypsy-travellers-people-outside>
- [103](#) McDonough, p. 192.
- [104](#) Bolton, "German Nationalist Jews during the Weimar and Early Third Reich Eras," *Inconvenient History* Vol. V, 2013, pp. 333-351.
Online: http://www.inconvenienthistory.com/archive/2013/volume_5/number_3/german_nationalist_jews.php
- [105](#) Lenni Brenner, *Zionism in the Age of the Dictators* (Connecticut: Lawrence Hill, 1983).
- [106](#) McDonough, p. 193.
- [107](#) Nahum Goldman, *My Life as a German Jew*, p. 120; cited by Walendy, p. 7.
- [108](#) McDonough, pp. 194-95.
- [109](#) Ibid, p. 195.

- [110](#) Joseph Goebbels, *My Part in Germany's Fight* (London: the Paternoster Library, 1938), diary entry for March 26, 1933.
- [111](#) Joseph Goebbels, March 31, 1933.
- [112](#) Joseph Goebbels, April 1, 1933.
- [113](#) Joseph Goebbels, April 4, 1933.
- [114](#) "World Jewry's declaration of war on Germany," *New York Times*, August 7, 1933.
- [115](#) Zionist Association of Germany via Jewish Telegraphic Union, March 26, 1933, cited by Udo Walendy, *The Transfer Agreement and the Boycott Fever 1933*, (Essen, 1987), p. 6.
- [116](#) Edwin Black, *The Transfer Agreement – The Untold Story of the Secret Pact between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine* (New York, 1984), cited by Walendy, p. 10.
- [117](#) Ibid, p. 42, cited by Walendy, p. 11.
- [118](#) Ibid, p. 20, cited by Walendy, p. 10.
- [119](#) Ibid, p. 34, cited by Walendy, p. 11.
- [120](#) Ibid, p. 42, cited by Walendy, p. 11.
- [121](#) Ibid, p. 47, cited by Walendy, p. 11.
- [122](#) Dresdner Bank to Societe General, July 1933, Black, 266, cited by Walendy, p. 16.
- [123](#) Black, pp. 266-267, cited by Walendy, p. 16.
- [124](#) Ibid, p. 119, cited by Walendy, p. 13.
- [125](#) Ibid, p. 188, cited by Walendy, p. 14.
- [126](#) McDonough, p. 198.
- [127](#) Ibid, p. 199.
- [128](#) Ibid, p. 201.
- [129](#) Ibid, p. 202.
- [130](#) Ibid, p. 207.
- [131](#) Ibid, p. 209.
- [132](#) Ibid, p. 213.

- [133](#) Ibid, p. 217.
- [134](#) Ibid, p. 227.
- [135](#) Ibid, pp. 228-229.
- [136](#) Ibid, p. 229.
- [137](#) Ibid, p. 237.
- [138](#) Ibid, p. 238.
- [139](#) See for example Bacque and Keeling.
- [140](#) McDonough, p. 252.

Author(s):	Kerry R. Bolton
Title:	Reconsidering Hitler's Gestapo
Sources:	<i>Inconvenient History</i> , 8(3) 2016
Dates:	published: 2016-09-05, first posted: 2016-11-30 14:20:32

<http://inconvenienthistory.com/8/3/4172>